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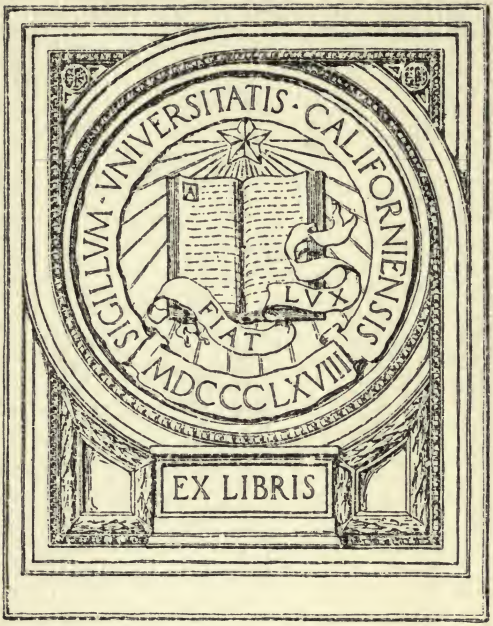
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TO COLLEGE GIRLS
AND OTHER ESSAYS

BY

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SCIENCES HARVARD UNIVERSITY

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TO MY DAUGHTER

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TO THE GIRL WHO WOULD CULTIVATE HERSELF

For a clever boy, no matter how poor, to rise as a man to his own level is so common, especially in America, as to excite no comment. His level may be that of the uncultivated rich, the self-made man of business, or that of the literary scholar: whatever it is, if he has energy, courage, and a fair chance, he reaches it. All this may be true of a girl; but a girl seldom gets what a boy would call, in his own case, a fair chance. In most of the learned professions she is still eyed with disfavor; in the effort to go to college she has many more sympathizers than of old, but few who feel that a college training is for her a ne-

cessity; in business, beyond stenography, typewriting, and such other subjects as are taught at commercial schools and paid for by small or moderate salaries, she can rarely compete with men. There is no getting round the fact that a girl is a girl, and that as such — whatever her courage and her cleverness — she is hampered in the rough struggle for advancement, distinction, and wealth. A few women of exceptional attainments and privileges earn large salaries; but compared with those who marry people that earn large salaries their number is insignificant. Through marriage or inheritance most women win such material wealth as they possess, and with it such opportunities for culture and intellectual pleasure as well-spent

wealth affords. Yet in our country an unmarried girl, with only her own efforts to support her, may lift her life above its drudgery and may become in greater or less degree a cultivated woman. I assume that she has fair health, though many girls not physically strong do what I have in mind. The principal requisites are common sense and courage.

Common sense, like humor, is a saving quality, showing its possessor what not to do, as well as what to do; and by it all ambition may fitly be tested. No girl can learn too early that there is a vast difference between feeling too big for a place and being too big for it, and that feeling too big for one's work and surroundings seldom if ever results in culture. Rather it breeds discontent, vanity, idle-

ness, and not infrequently vice. Sometimes it is accompanied by a dull persistency which achieves the means without the end. No just person will deny the merit, or even the success, of the intelligent dull, or will fail to see in their success hope for himself and the race; but every just person of experience will be ware of artificially lifting the unintelligent dull to a level above their own, a level at which they cannot be maintained without constant "boosting." "It is better to be a good dyer than a poor preacher," said a shrewd gentleman to an ambitious mill-hand whose quality he suspected. The ministry offers a startling illustration of the danger in tempting men by large scholarships and the hope of social respectability to a life

for which their sole fitness is a kind of negative virtue. "He ought never to go into the ministry," said a distinguished clergyman of a youth helped through college by a scholarship of three hundred dollars a year because of his ministerial purpose. "Why not?" I asked. "Is n't he a good fellow?" "My dear sir," was the answer, "the church is cursed with good people." The minister's work, as every efficient minister knows, needs men that are filled with manly life, men of wisdom, of instinctive — not professional — sympathy, men of fearless leadership, men of power; and no other profession has suffered so much from the artificial infusion of weaklings. The teacher's profession suffers similarly, though less. "I do not believe," said

an able graduate of a college for women, "in taking a girl out of her mother's kitchen, where she is of some use, and giving her scholarships to make her a second-rate school-teacher." Gifted Hopkins, in Dr. Holmes's "Guardian Angel," was born to sell tape and to write verses for the local newspaper. These were decent, honorable occupations from which the effort to rescue him for higher things would have come to a humiliating end. Thus the girl who has a right to rise and who rises to some purpose is she who, not mistaking vanity for refinement, uses her woman's sensitiveness in doing, not in avoiding, her daily work; who sees in that work, however mean, something great and divine, and by the light that never was on sea or

land, is led from the common things which it glorifies into intimate communion with those who have shed the glory upon the painted canvas or the printed page. Her state of mind is as far as possible from mere unleavened restlessness. "Restlessness without a purpose," says Phillips Brooks, "is discontent; with a purpose, progress." Of the thousand men and women that we see on every holiday hanging to the electric cars or dragging themselves and their children through the crowded street, few gain rest and refreshment; most are squandering time and strength and money in the excitement of discontented motion. They, too, have achieved a means without an end, activity without progress. One of the first lessons for a girl (as for any one

else) is the lesson of doing faithfully and heartily the work that is before her, of growing by doing it, not by neglecting it, of fitting herself for big tasks, so far as she is capable of them, by doing her own little tasks in a big way, not by shirking them as unworthy of her gifted and aspiring soul. "They tell me," said one of the stupidest and laziest and weakest men I have ever met, "that I should be a good deal of a man if I lived in a different kind of a place"; and with this in mind he became less than half a man where he did live. If you have dishes to wash and want to read poetry, wash the dishes first. I have known servant girls with considerable education and culture; but I do not count among these the girl whose mistress, seeing, in the mid-

dle of the morning, that the beds were not made, discovered her lying on a bed with a novel in her hand.

Granted that a girl does her work in the right spirit, she has still a good deal of time to herself. It may come in long stretches or in odd minutes; but even in odd minutes it is precious. The girl who makes the most of herself is she who first does her work generously, and next uses her odd minutes well. To use them at all requires flexibility and concentration, qualities that seldom come without urging, but qualities that insure efficiency. To hold your attention fixed on one thing and, when that is done, to fix it instantly on another and hold it there as if the first had never been — this is what every active life demands and what few

human creatures can adequately supply: yet something like this is in the power of us all; and we should work for it as we value helpfulness and happiness. The best training for it is the simple habit of industry.

For the girl who would cultivate herself, the natural resource in odd minutes is reading. By reading fifteen minutes a day, it is said, a person may become cultivated. Most girls read more than that; but most girls are not cultivated. What do most girls read?

Here I come to one of the melancholy aspects of human nature in general, if not of feminine nature in particular. Ruskin's question, "Do you know that if you read this, you cannot read that?" is so simple that it seems to slight the hearer's in-

telligence; yet it is justified by the persistent unintelligence of the reading world. With one life to live, with each day, and each minute, when it is gone, gone forever, we read the illustrated scandals of eloping chorus girls or of their kinswomen in high life at Newport or New York. Beyond this, we read the fiction of the day whether in magazines or novels; and we get it no longer at our own cost from such circulating libraries as filled the empty head of Lydia Languish, but from free public libraries given, it may be, to the people by generous men and women who have thought to educate thereby the neighbors and friends of their youth — temptation offered in the name of culture to those who eagerly accept the offering. Fiction is a fine

art and as truly an instrument of culture as music or painting; but debased fiction is scarcely more cultivating than the song of the vaudeville specialist or the chromo awarded to the preserver of ten soap wrappers. The stage, too, is an instrument of culture; but the stage has produced both Shakspere and the Rogers Brothers.

I can readily understand the state of mind that makes intelligent "solid" reading difficult if not impossible. A girl who has stood all day behind the counter of a "stuffy" shop may lack the nervous vigor for philosophy or political economy or for any history not narrative and romantic. To such a girl relief and delight may justly come through fiction; and with them may come the

beginning of culture. No intelligent girl can read "The Newcomes" or "Pendennis" or "Henry Esmond" or "Vanity Fair" without some share in the joys and sorrows and sympathies of that great mind and greater heart which conceived them all; without some inward sense, however rudimentary, of what it means to say things worth saying and to say them well; without some discrimination between gentle manners, in high life or in low, and vulgarity of peasant or of prince. To love Thackeray is almost a liberal education; yet this great and intensely lovable master, one of the greatest and most lovable in all fiction, lies uncalled for on the shelf, condemned without a hearing as a pessimist and a cynic. "Ah, my worthy friend," said he, "it is

astonishing how soft-hearted these cynics are. I dare say, if we could have come upon Diogenes by surprise, we should have found him reading sentimental novels and whimpering in his tub." "He could not," says a critic, "have written 'Vanity Fair' as he has unless Eden had been shining in his inner eye."

Again, no healthy-minded girl comes face to face with the courageous womanliness of Elizabeth Bennet, rising through sweetness and good sense above a mother of humiliating vulgarity, or the delicate conscience of Fanny Price, undervitalized but charming in her sensitive devotion, without learning much from the author of "Pride and Prejudice" and of "Mansfield Park"; without learning the efficiency of

good sense and good humor in literature and in life; without discovering that a style with no ornament, a style which marches straight on, is, in the right hands, a wonderfully effective style, and that a book to be interesting need not leave the beaten track of everyday life. Still again, no girl with a touch of the romantic, such as every girl should have, can fail to be the happier and the more cultivated for knowing early and always the perennial king of English romance, the author of "Quentin Durward" and "Ivanhoe." The mere mention of these three writers—all so great, yet each so different from either of the others—is enough to make us blush for the hours and the days that we have wasted on yellow newspapers

and yellow novels and trivial magazines.

"But," it may be said, "no matter how much education an untrained girl would get from such authors if she gave herself up to them, will she—can she—give herself up to them? Can she read them with that zest which alone will make them memorable and inspiring?" With a little courage at the start, she can. Nothing about literature is more remarkable or more encouraging than the power of the greatest literature to reach all earnest human beings. Not to speak of the Bible, Shakspere is read in the chamber and heard on the stage by men and women whose education stopped with the grammar school; and as to Homer we remember how the snowbound out-

casts of Poker Flat were absorbed in the fate of "Ash-heels." Homer and Shakspere are almost in a class by themselves; yet other classics, not so great, may educate us and, while educating, may delight. I know that to some minds the very word *classic* is cold and repellent, suggesting something which people tell us we ought to like and which, in consequence, we like the less. It is well to remember a helpful word of Professor Barrett Wendell's, that a classic would not be a classic if it had not interested thousands of human beings, and that what has interested thousands of human beings cannot be without interest to us. Writing of more than transient interest — if written in good literary form — becomes in some measure a classic.

No classic will interest every reader; but every reader, with a little experimenting, can find some classic that interests him. Having thus discovered among books which have stood the test of time some one that pleases him, let him read others by the same author, whose charm he has begun to feel, and make that author's work a part of himself. Then — so rapid is the growth of taste — he will find that trashy writing no longer meets his needs; he will find, also, that a second interesting classic writer is easier to discover than a first; in time he will find that some authors whom he rejected in his early experiments have become his closest friends. And after we have once intimately known great work and have felt the thrill of the growth that comes with

such a knowledge, the process of cultivation advances fast. With it advances also, through the influence of what we read and through our unconscious or half-conscious absorption of it, our accuracy and power in the use of our own language. We have begun to live in the most interesting society — far more interesting than most of that society which frequents the houses of people whose good fortune we envy. At small cost we may have on our own table the best work of the greatest men and women of all time, may think their thoughts, dream their dreams, see their visions. All that we need is a little staying power; for, as some one has said, "every great writer must in some measure create the atmosphere in which he is to be en-

joyed"; we must give him a little time. I have mentioned Thackeray's "Newcomes." Before the opening chapter of "The Newcomes" the stoutest heart may quail. Read the chapter or skip it, as you wish; but do not because of it abandon the book.

I have said little about poetry; yet poetry has, as an educator, a certain practical advantage which Professor Wendell pointed out when he observed that of all the fine arts it is the most portable. You can carry in your pocket more fine art (for less money) in poetry than in anything else. I said your pocket; I might have said your head. And love of poetry may be acquired by almost all. Girls as a rule are born with it and need only make sure that it is not stifled in them; yet it is a love

that every year may be cultivated and increased. Most girls, with even a grammar school education, care for Longfellow; most girls care for Tennyson; from these they may pass to others, widening their appreciation every year and every day. Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" is no more helpful — and no more intelligible — than Browning's "Prospice," the inspiration of a man whom most girls reject unread. Such works as Professor Norton's "Heart of Oak Books," which bring together the best English poems for young people and introduce the reader to many authors at their best, are invaluable as starting-points. Indeed the girl who really knows the "Heart of Oak Books" (prose and verse) has no mean acquaintance with English

literature. Such a girl, however, will not stop with such an acquaintance. She has tasted the delight of good reading and need no longer be bidden to the feast. She has already begun to commit to memory the short poems that she loves best and to learn how they can transform what once were dull and waiting hours. Short poems for odd minutes — one to read for every day in the year — here is a course in culture which nobody is too poor to take, which nobody should be too dull to enjoy. When once a girl has gained the love of literature for its own sake, such a book as Professor Winchester's "Short Courses in English Reading," which names the characteristic works of each important period in our literature, will serve as an admir-

able guide. Books, such as I have mentioned, that bring the reader face to face with the great authors themselves, are vastly better than books about books, except as these latter may lead us to great authors whom we should otherwise neglect.

I have barely mentioned the Bible, which few of us read as we should, none of us as we might, and which, — even apart from every religious consideration, — if read little by little every day with an active mind, trains a girl's literary judgment as it can be trained by nothing else. The effect of the Bible on English style may be seen at its best in the work of John Bunyan — otherwise almost illiterate — or of Abraham Lincoln, into whose heart and speech the Bible early found its way. To

this book almost alone our literature is indebted for these self-taught and universally acknowledged masters.

I am well aware that reading is only one means of culture. I have not forgotten the culture that comes of intimacy with Nature; and it were a nice question whether Emerson owed more to his Plato or to his pine tree. I have not forgotten that

> "There 's no one season such delight can bring
> As summer, autumn, winter, and the spring"

or that love of books is scarcely a blessing at all if it seals our eyes — which it should aid us in keeping open — to the sea, the mountains, and the stars. I take reading for what it is worth as *one* help only, but one which allies others to itself even as the five talents may become ten. For

if the germ of culture once gets into the system, it propagates itself with marvellous speed. There are, it is true, individuals whom it affects in one part and not in others, lovers of literature who delight in vulgar vaudeville, lovers of music who devour detective stories and dime novels, lovers of the pure and high who by contrast enjoy — or try to think they enjoy — sporadic attacks of the impure and low; but, in general, culture in one art leads to taste in others, for it refines the intellect. And though she who has cultivated herself by reading may know little of painting or of music, she has put herself into that actively receptive condition which will make progress, even in those arts, rapid when the opportunity comes. She has learned that the

greatest minds, like the sun and the stars, shine for all who have eyes and hearts to welcome their quickening rays. She may be a teacher of stubborn and stupid little children; she may write dull business letters at the dictation of vulgar men; she may sell hairpins all day behind a counter; she may make eyelets in a shoe factory; but when the minutes come that are her own, she steps instantly into a life from which no drudgery can divorce her — a life the breath of which inspires her daily work, however mean, with a kind of glory. For the work is her discipline, her part in the ceaseless renewal of that great and multifarious life which we call the world; and she can do it, for she has tasted the joy of the "unconquerable soul."

TO SCHOOLGIRLS AT GRADUATION

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Graduation from school — whether the pupil is "finished," as we say in unconscious irony, or sent to college —is a serious matter. It sets people thinking about you, and sets you thinking about yourselves, — or, rather, if you are right-minded, about your part in life. Nothing is more rapid and tremendous than the changes that will come to many of you in the next half-dozen years. How can this school or any school prepare you each and all for the mysterious responsibilities, the suddenly varied and diverse complications into which time is sure to throw you?

"Nothing," it was said long ago, "is so certain as the unexpected." How can we get ready for what we know nothing about?

It is idle to speculate long on some things that make a fascinating dream and often a hard, though cherished, reality; but it is idler to drift without a plan, to let the certainty of the unexpected control your present life or leave it uncontrolled. Thus we see the answer to my question. Life is difficult and complex; preparation for life is strangely simple. Truth and devotion, that is all. Hold fast to these things, and leave the rest to experience. You may be green in many situations; you may and will make blunders; in the sudden turns of life you may not be flexible enough (few are); the measure of

your success may depend on the measure of your intelligence: but you cannot utterly fail.

You may say that telling people to have truth and devotion is well enough, but that, like the clergyman's exhortation to follow Christ, it seems vague. Things come to our daily lives as concrete problems; and we succeed — if we do succeed — through repeated acts which create in us a habit or a general principle. Yet we need the principle to direct the acts. It is like the old question, "Which came first, the hen or the egg?"

Not quite so bad, after all. To many women — as to some men — devotion is instinctive: to other women it is at first a matter of will; but when they love, it becomes instinctive, as it

does, for instance, in nearly all mothers. And every girl has some sense of truth. To give this sense staying-power, to prevent a girl from losing her head where her feelings are concerned, from warping her reason by emotion and saying anything which for the moment seems to help her cause, — to give her, in short, a *trained* sense of truth and a trained hold on it, is one object of such education as you have had. I know a school in which intellectual accuracy is constantly brought to bear on moral life, so that even the arithmetic lesson helps the pupil to be truthful. The simple cases every girl understands. Every girl, for instance, in this school or in any other, knows that if she copies a composition from a book or from another

girl's work and hands it in as her own, she is, for the time being, false to her school and to herself. And if she thinks a minute, she cannot blame people for not trusting her in anything until she has put her life on such a basis as shall make dishonest work impossible. Here is one everyday opportunity to exercise the principles of truth and devotion at school.

You go out of school into the world — all of you in some degree, and some of you in a high degree, to be cultivated women — with a power that a few of you are just beginning to know. "Who is it that rules the world?" said Major Henry Lee Higginson. "Doesn't everybody know," he added, "that it is women?" The greater the power, the more danger-

ous. How shall you use your power wisely and justly?

Let us begin with some of the uses that are unwise and unjust. One of the lowest of these is the deliberate, systematic, and indiscriminate use of personal fascination — the use of power for the pleasure of exercising it and for no good end; the use of power that unsteadies men right and left, and ends in an emptiness which makes you scorn yourselves. Personal charm is one of the great and unexplained gifts of heaven. Some people have it all their lives and never know it; and when they are dead, after their long and anxious and self-distrustful years, we wring our very hearts because we have not told them. Yet had we told them, and had they believed us, they might

have lost it for ever. Indeed, I doubt whether we could have made them believe us; at the most they would have feared, as Emerson's lover feared about the girl he loved, that our feeling for them had "died in its last expression." Personal charm, self-recognized as part of one's capital, the power to fascinate men, consciously used to give zest to life, becomes almost despicable: at the very least it tends to make a girl useless and leads her to make men useless by distracting them; at the worst it breaks homes and happiness. I speak of something quite different from that desire to please which is born of courtesy and devotion, and which brings at length an honest charm of its own when the attraction of the professionally charming

has lost its power over all who thoroughly know them. I have in mind those vain and foolish girls to whom the homage of men is the glory of womanhood. The professional beauty, though she often lacks personal charm, belongs in the same category, and what she pins her faith to is even more fleeting. Whatever you do, keep your souls white from the effort to fascinate men.

Again, truth and devotion demand nowadays that a woman shall do something. A year or two of social experience or of travel may be regarded as part of an education; but there is no excuse for people who make such things an end in life, and no excuse for the mere time-killer, whether man or woman, whether poor or rich. "Mr. Jones," said a

youth to a maiden, "is the most wonderful man I ever saw. He knows every card I had at bridge a week ago." "Has it ever occurred to you," said the girl, "that he is forty-five years old and that he doesn't know anything else?" "Don't you know that girl?" said a gentleman, as he bowed to a strikingly handsome lady. "She wins more money at bridge than any other woman in Boston." Even outside of the question of gambling, there is something shocking in that kind of notoriety, if only for the waste of time it implies. A game of cards (without gambling) for relaxation now and then, by all means; but cards all day and half the night and Sunday — can you think of a life more arid? I remember a party of young men and women (Americans)

who were visiting Rome, presumably for the first time, and who, after a late breakfast, would settle in the hotel parlor every day for a whole morning at cards. What business had such people in Rome? What business had they anywhere? Men and women are bound to justify their existence. They may give years to preparation for the work of life (they are fortunate if they can), but even in these preparatory years — even in the early years of which an important part is play — they must show, in their work and in their play, some promise of truth and devotion or the outlook is hard for them and theirs. If you are going into society for experience, cut out one day a week for deeper experience, for some kind of helpful work to keep your soul

from shrinking. Whenever you see a society girl of peculiar loveliness, you will find that society has only a part of her and not the best part. Whatever you do, whether you work in the slums or go to a cooking-school, do something outside of parties and calls and afternoon teas, which are weak diet alike for body and mind. Not the least advantage of a serious purpose is its power to choke affectation. No one self-forgetfully at work is affected — unless indeed an early affectation has "set," or "jelled," as it were, in her youth and has thus become a natural part of herself.

A word here as to college. When I was young, a girl who went to college was thought queer. Now a girl who may go and does not is some-

times thought queerer. People who know have long since discovered that the college girl is quite as human and delightful as any other girl, and likely to be a better companion through life. No doubt there are odd and unwomanly college girls; but they are singularly few. Even society "finish," for which college girls might seem to lack time and opportunity, is often acquired, in no small amount, at college. Those of us who have seen what education does for a woman, would send to college every capable and healthy girl who has the means of going. College life gives us, or should give us, a larger way of looking at things—the power of seeing the difference between a petty thing that to the untrained and selfish mind seems

big, and a little thing that is lighted and glorified into a big one because it is a small outward sign of a great inward truth. Take, for instance, a matter in which there are probably more sinners among women than among men. I do not say that college life eradicates pettiness, but it ought to get out of any girl's head the wrong kind of sensitiveness and put in the right kind. By the wrong kind I mean what exists to a pitiful extent among women otherwise good, the kind that busies itself with small questions of precedence. I have known women who really cared whether other women were asked to pour out tea oftener than they; I have known good women arranging a series of afternoon teas to think it vital that if Mrs. X. were asked to

pour out tea, Mrs. Y. should be asked, and asked an equal number of times — even though Mrs. X. was infinitely better fitted than Mrs. Y. for that particular job. Such women, if you will pardon my saying it, cannot understand "a good manly view" of people's mutual relations. It is right to take pains, even in small ways, lest others' feelings shall be hurt; but it is not right to decide everything or anything according to small jealousies and morbid suspicions of indignity. Among all the unprofitable servants (if not wicked and slothful) few are more unprofitable than the people who are always on the watch for a slight. There are such men; there are more such women than a healthy-minded man would conceive if he were not

brought face to face with the sad fact. "I don't see," said a large-hearted woman, with college training, who constantly busies herself with big and real matters, "I don't see how people have time for such things in so good and busy a world." I know intimately a man who has been worried about nearly everything that could worry man or woman, but was never worried because he was not invited to Mrs. A.'s reception, or because Mrs. B. shook hands with somebody else first, or because Mr. C. walked through a doorway ahead of him, or because Mr. D. sat at the hostess's right hand, or because Mr. E. was asked to speak first or last (whichever the place of honor may be) — though he has often been worried because he himself was

asked to speak at all. It is a shock, when we look up to women, and find them squandering their strength on things like these — things compared with which millinery becomes almost august. In Beaumont and Fletcher's beautiful play "Philaster, or Love Lies a-bleeding," Euphrasia, a noble lady, has, like Viola, taken the guise of a page to serve the man she loves. To this page, known as Bellario, Philaster says,

"Oh, but thou dost not know what 't is to die."
Bellario. "Yes, I do, my lord.
'T is less than to be born, a lasting sleep,
A quiet resting from all jealousy,
A thing we all pursue ; I know besides
It is but giving over of a game
That must be lost."

When we think of the circumstances, the line "A quiet resting from all jealousy" becomes inexpressibly touch-

ing. Even by itself it points to relief from one of the most hideous of human passions, and one to which, I suspect, women, with some reason, are more prone than men. I think of the sudden hardening of face and voice with which one good woman speaks of another, the mean little insinuations of women really generous in big things, the petty spite between next-door neighbors in country towns, who go on for years without speaking to each other, though each would rather talk than do anything else in the world. You remember the story of the woman who, when the census-taker asked her age, replied,

"Did the woman next door tell you how old she was?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'm two years younger than she is!"

These things may be excusable in villages, but not in the free, wide-seeing life of an educated woman. These are the little things that the great truths, of which the college gives us glimpses, force out of sight and mind. Women rule the world: let them keep sweet and sound.

A kindred variety of sensitiveness, in which men have their full share, is the resentment that comes of not being, or seeming not to be appreciated. Some few persons, no doubt, are not appreciated; but they are not the persons who should call attention to the fact, except by their steady patience and devotion. A healthy human being learns to pocket grievances, to burn his own smoke as the

saying is, to waste no energy in taking offence, to remember that since he does not like everybody, he cannot expect everybody to like him. He learns to bear and forbear, and, best of all, to fix his mind not on small disturbances but on his work, "with malice toward none, with charity for all."

The dangers at which I have hinted are closely related to that very sensitiveness which gives girls and women their peculiar power. One of the best things in the world is the ability to put yourself into another's place — a power granted to the sensitive only, and hence to women rather than to men. Quickness to feel atmospheric cross currents in social life, instantaneous and practical sympathy with grief, reckless de-

votion beside the sick bed — these things belong to those who suffer indeed, but suffer to noble ends. It is these things that show women to be of finer clay than men. It is these things, containing the very essence of woman's power, of which some women are doing their best to rid themselves and their sex. The restlessly agitating woman in public life and her near relative, the nagging woman in private life, may have a kind of truth and a kind of devotion, but not the sense of things in their true relation and not the vision of the strength of gentleness. Rather she to whom the old poet said: —

"You for whose body God made better clay
Or took soul's stuff such as shall late decay
Or such as needs small change at the last day.

"This, as an amber drop enwraps a bee,
Covering discovers your quick soul that we
May in your through-shine front your heart's
thoughts see."

A good school and a good college after it fill a girl's mind with the greater issues of life. She has "no time in so good and busy a world" — a world that needs workers — to waste in coquetry or triviality or jealousy or vain regret that another's opportunity and charm are not hers. She sees on every hand what needs to be done, and like the prophet of old, she cries: "Here am I, send me"; and behold, men look upon her face as it had been the face of an angel, for her vision is the vision of the pure in heart.

Is it a low view of a woman's life to believe that her leadership is not like a man's, that nature gives men

one kind of power over the world and women another, that in political competition women are as much at a disadvantage as men are in the finer sympathies and graces of life? "I never could see," said my mother, "why women should want to vote; but if they do want to vote, I can't see what right men have to say they shan't" — a remark that has given me food for reflection. I too find it hard to see by what right the ballot is denied to women; yet with direct political responsibility comes much that would tend to weaken or destroy the power by which they rule the world to-day.

"To women," said President Eliot, "we owe the charm and the beauty of life" — and some women were offended at his saying it. It seemed like

the old notion that women are purely ornamental and secondary; it seemed a low view of them and their destiny. Yet, if I understand it, it is not only profoundly true, but a recognition of what is highest in women as what is highest in all human creatures — the power of transfiguring this daily drudging life of ours with the radiance that Browning had seen when he wrote:

"The white I saw shine through her was her soul's,"

the radiance that makes the young mother's face a "through-shine" face, the radiance that shone in and through Emerson when he wrote:

"Let me go where'er I will
I hear a sky-born music still:
It sounds from all things old,
It sounds from all things young,

From all that's fair, from all that's foul,
Peals out a cheerful song.
It is not only in the rose,
It is not only in the bird,
Not only where the rainbow glows,
Nor in the song of woman heard,
But in the darkest, meanest things
There alway, alway something sings.
'Tis not in the high stars alone,
Nor in the cups of budding flowers,
Nor in the red-breast's mellow tone,
Nor in the bow that smiles in showers,
But in the mud and scum of things
There alway, alway something sings."

Emerson indeed was one of the few men who, still manly, felt and made others feel, with the intuitive refinement of a woman, "the charm and the beauty of life"; because he was high-minded and clean-hearted, because he spiritualized everything, because his eyes were purged of the earthy, because he saw. There are women, even young girls, in whose

presence it is impossible to dwell on a low thought, to live on any level but the highest,—women who are a kind of revelation of heaven:

"She never found fault with you, never implied
Your wrong by her right; and yet men at her side
Grew nobler, girls purer, as through the whole town
The children were gladder that pulled at her gown."

There are such women that when their friends or their husbands or their children think evil or are tempted in business or in social life one hair's breadth from what is true, the thought of them shall make it harder to do wrong than to do right. These are the women to whom we owe "the charm and the beauty of life."

Not the least part of every girl's mission is to keep undefiled the spring of poetry in her heart, to live

above the vulgarity that, like vice, we first endure, then pity, then embrace, to remember that the poetry-killer is an enemy to his people. I know that much which passes for poetry is weak and immoral; but the poetry that I mean is what keeps us reverent and humble, brings us into instantaneous contact with the greatest things, rolls the mist away from the mountain peak: —

> "The shepherds moved
> Through the dull mist, I following, when a step,
> A single step that freed me from the skirts
> Of the blind vapour, opened to my view
> Glory beyond all glory ever seen
> By waking sense or by the dreaming soul."

It is ill for the nation that loses its poetic fervor. Yet with twelve pages of illustrated "journalism" every week-day and a hundred and twenty every Sunday, with Bull Durham and

Mr. Mennen staring at us across the green fields, with what is called opera vulgarized by such things as we see depicted in street posters, and what is called comedy made up of the adventures of faithless husbands and jealous wives, with the portraits of all the divorced people in real life and the details of their cases thrust under our eyes every day, it is only human to run down. And, as our population increases, it becomes harder and harder to free ourselves from the network of wires through which we lift our eyes to the skyscrapers that shut out the eternal hills. Some years ago an old lady in Salem, Massachusetts, complained at the City Hall of the electric wires.

"Do they hurt your house?"

"No."

"Do they damage your trees?"

"No."

"What is the matter, then?"

"Well, when Harriet and I sit out on the piazza, we don't want to look at God's heaven through a grid-iron."

That is what those of us who dwell in cities are doing physically; and after doing it long physically we do it spiritually unless we take care. Some people who think they love the woods and the sea no sooner get to what they think they love than they vulgarize it. The sea-shore, indeed, where it is not private property, becomes a place for clam-bakes, looping the loop, and unconcealed love-making.

Now there are two ways of holding fast to poetry under present conditions, and neither is quite complete

in itself. One is by looking beyond the scroll-saw shanties with sign-boards on them, beyond the strutting youth with his hand thrust into the arm of that awful girl in yellow and black with pink ribbons, out on the everlasting sea; and this we must learn to do now and then if we would, as it were, keep our peace with God: and as women are more sensitive than men, so do they, in the drudgery of daily life, stand more in need of a breath from the boundless ocean or the eternal hills: —

"You and I and the hills!
Do you think we could live for a day,
With the useless, wearying wrongs and ills
And the cherished cares away?
Rebels of progress and our clay —
Do you think we could live for a day?

"You and I and the dawn,
With the great light breaking through,

And the woods astir with a wakened fawn,
And our own hearts wakened, too;
With the bud in the hollow, the bird on the spray,
Do you think we could live for a day?

"You and I and the dusk,
With the first stars in the glow —
And the faith that our ills are but the husk
With the kernel of life below;
With the joy of the hills and the throb of the May,
Do you think we could live for a day?"

The other way I have hinted at already by quoting Emerson's song about the something that sings. It was tried by Walt Whitman, who sometimes, instead of making common things poetic, degraded poetry. It has been tried, with much success here and there, by Mr. Kipling — in "McAndrew's Hymn," for example, in "The Song of the Banjo," in the "King," —

"All unseen
Romance brought up the nine-fifteen."

It was used long ago without trying by Homer. What is less poetic than dirty clothes? Yet in the most tremendous part of the Iliad, when Achilles is hotly pursuing Hector round the walls of Troy, Homer introduces dirty clothes with a touch so sure that, even in the prose translation, they do not lessen the poetry but add to it: —

"Past the watch-tower, past the wild fig-tree beaten by the wind, ever out from the wall, over the wagon path, they rushed to where two springs shoot upward from eddying Scamander. One with warm waters flows, and round about smoke rises from it as of flaming fire. The other even in summer hath a stream like hail or chilling snow or water turned to ice. And there hard by upon the banks are washing troughs, wide, of splendid stonework; and there the Trojan wives

and daughters fair would wash their shining robes in early days of peace before the sons of the Achaians came. Past these they swept."

Go back to the sources. Lose no opportunity of contact with greater nature and greater art — with woods and mountains and ocean, with the masters of music and painting and poetry. Begin the Iliad or the Inferno, even with grammar and lexicon, and you know instantly that you are in the presence of one of the greatest things in the world. To you the treasures of time are open; let them not be open in vain. Do not adopt a scheme or drift into a habit of life which will not suffer you to touch the hem of the garment that shall make you whole. What you get from pure religion and undefiled

(not fashionable and perfunctory), from the mountains and the ocean, from the highest poetry, works in you and through you in ways that no man understands, and makes you see and lead others to see the glory that lies in and about our lives — a glory without the vision of which we "sit in darkness, being bound in affliction and iron."

In your poetry I include your dreams and your reveries. I remember my dejection when a gaunt philosopher whose college lectures I attended, told his class of vigorous boys that a reverie is "the worst kind of mental dissipation." In my heart I rebelled; but I dared not then say that he was wrong, and he would have made short work of me if I had done so. The mere dreamer is likely

to be of little use, I grant, though even he may be a poet in the chrysalis; but deliver me from the man or woman who never dreams, the being to whom, as Ruskin says, "the primrose is very accurately the primrose because he does not love it." "Paley is a good scholar," said an English schoolmaster of the famous editor of Æschylus, "but he will use such a word as 'irreclaimably' in translating a Greek tragic chorus." Can such a man really *know* anything of Greek poetry? Poetry is so evasive and volatile that often, if we turn a poem word for word into another language, the poetry has gone; the spirit has refused to change its house. Much of our poetry comes to us in these very reveries; "for dreams also," said Plato, "are from God."

This is another way of saying, do not be afraid of being romantic. So long as you have principles to keep you from seeing romance in bad things — such as the life of fast men — and humor to keep you from sentimental folly, be romantic if you will, and be the better for it. Next to strong faith there is nothing that will help you through the tight places like romance *and humor*. Enthusiasm is your right and your glory by reason of your youth. Cherish it, and if it leads you to a foolish blunder now and then, save yourself by humor: —

"On fire that glows
With heat intense
I turn the hose
Of common sense,
And out it goes
At small expense.

It is romance that discovers new worlds and new stars — science, if you will, but romance in science. It is romance in one life that kindles another life to brave deeds and devoted service. Your romance, therefore, is part of your high efficiency. People try sometimes to strip science and literature and history of romance; but their science repels, their literature irritates and stupefies: as for their history, in the words of Mr. Justice Holmes, "After history has done its best to fix men's thoughts upon strategy and finance, their eyes have turned and rested on some single romantic figure, — some Sidney, some Montcalm, some Shaw." Build your air-castles, and when you find yourself ceasing to build them, throw yourself into some great work

that shall rouse you to build more. Into them goes, and out of them comes again threefold the buoyancy of your life. "I know," says Emerson, "how easy it is to sneer at your sanguine youth and its glittering dreams. But I find the gayest castles in the air that were ever piled far better for comfort and for use than the dungeons in the air that are daily dug and carved out by grumbling, discontented people."

It seems strange to tell young girls with every appearance of health and happiness that one of the hardest problems of life is to keep cheerful; but I dare say some of you know it already. I remember an old New Englander who unconsciously revealed his theory of life in his salutation, which was not "How do you

do?" but "How do you stan' it?" No matter how free our animal spirits, how spontaneous our fun, how delightful our friends, we are compassed about by all sorts of sin and sorrow (as any newspaper will show us in one minute) as well as by the awful mystery of life and death. Sometimes our despondency has a prosaic cause, such as hunger, which, though it shows how the mind may be a slave to the body, is not lasting. Oftener depression is the reaction from what few, young or old, can resist in so busy and complicated a world,—the effort to carry a great deal more than our bodies and minds can stand up under. It is depression of the nervous system, which system we have disregarded in our plans. Do not forget

that the better and the harder you have worked, the stronger is the reaction, the deeper the depression, the more nearly ineradicable the notion that you have failed. Keep, if you can, a steady hand on yourself, and do not be misled into a life that will take all the rebound out of your system while you are still in your girlhood; since nothing, not even training, can quite make up for the elastic strength of youth when mind and body rejoice in their own activity, and when work at conscious high pressure, or at conscious low pressure, is unknown.

Yet out of that same nervous sensitiveness which uncontrolled brings its days of depression may come an exquisite joy. When my old teacher, Doctor William Everett, declared

that Sparta had no great men, I ventured to name Leonidas. "Leonidas!" he exclaimed. "Nothing but bull-dog about *him*." Whether he was right or wrong as to Leonidas, I do not know; but he had in mind the general truth that a man may be brave in proportion to his sensitiveness. It follows that a woman, beyond all, may know the triumphant ecstasy of courage.

My friend Professor Barrett Wendell, after making a speech at a girls' college, came back low in his mind. "It was bad," he said. "Why?" I asked. "Was n't it true?" "Yes," he answered, "that was the trouble with it." So it must always seem to the preacher of old doctrines. Yet old as are the doctrines and the experiences of which I speak, to you of the grad-

uating class the experiences must in part be new. There are few groups of human beings more interesting than a class of schoolgirls going out into the new world of college or of society. There are few hearts of men or women that do not yearn toward them, longing to help them with that experience which they would probably reject and to which, after all, there is no royal road. No one can speak to you and forget that you are to rule the next generation; that to you your lovers, your husbands, your children will look for the best part of what makes life beautiful and true. You stand together for the last time. Is there no word that is yours and yours only — nothing but the old exhortation to the old virtues? No, there is nothing but this: Speak the

truth, do your work, and see the glory of it all. Do not join the band of those who chafe without what they call "large opportunities," but do your work in such a spirit as shall make larger the opportunities you have. "You picture to yourself," says Phillips Brooks, "the beauty of bravery and steadfastness. And then some wretched little disagreeable duty comes which is your martyrdom, the lamp for your oil; and if you do not do it, your oil is spilled." Remember that

> "Hye god som tyme senden can
> His grace in-to a litel oxes stalle."

Do your work with that love which is the quintessence of your womanhood — not just your work and no more, but a little more for the lavishing's sake, that little more which is worth

all the rest, for it "discovers your quick soul." Shake off the petty meannesses that beset a sensitive heart: work greatly, love greatly.

And if you suffer as you must, and if you doubt as you may, do your work. Put your heart into it, and the sky will clear. Then out of your very doubt and suffering shall be born the supreme joy of life: and whether you know it or not, there will be those who when everything seems to close black about them will yet say to themselves,

> "God's in his heaven,
> All's right with the world,"

for I have seen Him in her face.

TO COLLEGE GIRLS

TO COLLEGE GIRLS

It is more than forty years since the girls' college appeared in America. Contrary to prophecy, some women who went to it remained women still; hence the girls' college girl of the second generation, — who is now well under way. We have thus begun to test the staying power of the educated woman — in body, in mind, and in womanliness.

Some fifty years ago Dr. Holmes, after dwelling on the vulgarities of girls' "finishing" schools, remarked, "And yet these schools, with their provincial French and their mechanical accomplishments, with their cheap parade of diplomas and Commencements, and other public hon-

ors, have an ever fresh interest to all who see the task they are performing in our new social order. These girls are not being educated for governesses, or to be exported with other manufactured articles. . . . Most of them will be wives, and every American husband is a possible President of the United States. Any one of these girls may be a four years' queen. There is no sphere of human activity so exalted that she may not be called upon to fill it."

"But," he adds, "there is another consideration of far higher interest. The education of our community to all that is beautiful is flowing in mainly through its women, and that to a considerable extent by the aid of these large establishments, the least perfect of which do something to

stimulate the higher tastes and partially instruct them. Sometimes there is perhaps reason to fear that girls will be too highly educated for their own happiness, if they are lifted by their culture out of the range of the practical and everyday working youth by whom they are surrounded. But this is a risk we must take. Our young men come into active life so early that, if our girls were not educated to something beyond mere practical duties, our material prosperity would outstrip our culture, as it often does in places where money is made too rapidly. This is the meaning, therefore, of that somewhat ambitious programme common to most of these large institutions, at which we sometimes smile, perhaps curiously or uncharitably."

What I have cited gives, I suspect, a pretty fair notion of the ordinary academic training for girls in the middle of the nineteenth century — a sort of bluff at literary and artistic culture, together with something popularly believed to be French. Even such an education gave access to great works of literature; and this to a girl of natural refinement was much. A vulgar girl gets her Shakspere and Milton from her teacher; and if he is not an interpreter but a mere middleman, she is about as well off before reading them as after. A girl of finer and higher power may be led to Shakspere and Milton by the veriest charlatan; but once led to them, she makes them her own. Out of those crude academies came women of a sensitive, though nar-

row, culture that the academies themselves could not understand — such women as to-day go to college if they can and, at any sacrifice, send their daughters.

Dr. Holmes, we remember, feared that even the old academy might make a girl intellectually too exacting for the young men of her own circle who came early into active life; and to-day the girls' college is charged with the same offence. That has not been the danger to girls in the relative education of the sexes. A boy and girl have grown up together, have, in the country phrase, "gone together" for years, have learned to love each other, and have told each other what they have learned. The boy, quick at study and ambitious, has been sent to

college ; the girl has stayed at home and waited for him. The boy has outgrown the girl. It is partly his selfishness, but chiefly the inevitable need, with his newly opened mind, of a companion with intellectual interests and intellectual training. More and more he feels her rusticity and makes her feel it. Then comes the tragedy of the higher education, but it is not the tragedy of the higher education of women. In these days when more and more of our country boys go to college, there would be more such tragedies if our girls' colleges throughout the land were not fitting girls for a life—married or single—with resources of which half a century ago girls never dreamed. Now, when the boy goes to college, the girl goes too. Now, instead of

defending such culture as strays into pretentious school programmes, we find ourselves wedging our curriculum with "domestic science," lest the ideal crowd out the practical and the girl forget she is a girl.

College life, in its effect on a girl's mind, has not justified the sceptic's fears. College girls break down, it is true; yet no sensible girl, with good secondary training, breaks down from over-study. There are fanatics in study, whom neither advice nor command can restrain; who, like Milton, could not listen to the physician, not though he were Æsculapius himself; who, like Milton, are ready to grow deliberately blind for what they conceive to be a good cause. "One must have dyspepsia," said a woman with a wild passion

for learning — "One must have dyspepsia, or be a clod." There are girls (and boys) who break down because they persist in doing intellectual work underfed. "We must all learn self-control," says Major Henry Lee Higginson. "One man loves rum; another, work." There are more girls who break down because they lack the sense to see that they cannot at the same time lead a life actively intellectual and a life actively social. Overwork at college is quite different from overwork in college studies, with which it is often confounded. Commonly it is caused by theatricals, dances, music, athletics, making (and eating) fudge, — in short by all the manifold secondary things which, with human perversity, we insist on treating as primary. These

things are in themselves good — except perhaps the fudge, which I have added to my list at the suggestion of a true and certainly a tried college officer; but they are not good unless they know their place and stay there. Why so many of us put second things first and first things second or third I leave for psychologists to explain. A boy does it with less danger to his health, because a boy, as a rule, can shed, or benumb, or hypnotize his conscience; but woe to the girl — woe sooner or later — whose conscience is strong enough to make her study, yet not strong enough to keep her from what unfits her for study. When all is said, I believe that there is more nervous prostration in "society" than in college, and that the disease is especially virulent

among those women whose chief business is to kill time. In "society" there is also, from the college girl's point of view, a pathetic want of intellectual life.

The effect of college training on a girl's mind is promptly visible and nearly always delightful. Now and then you see a girl — or a girls' college — whose culture is mixed with an affectation both amusing and sad; but in affectation the society girl is sunk far deeper and with less hope of emerging. Nor does the college woman put on airs more insufferably than the college man, the youth with what Thackeray calls "that indescribable genteel simper which is only to be learned at the knees of Alma Mater." Affectation is something to which, in either sex

and in every sphere, light weights take kindly. College professors, social leaders, salesmen, milliners, brakemen in railway trains — all of us unless we watch ourselves; still more *if* we watch ourselves — may be its victims. The college student catches at least glimpses of the big things which awe us into simplicity. And not simplicity only, but reverence. "They talk of science and religion," said a distinguished professor in the Harvard Medical School. "No man can begin to see scientific truth without finding something which, if he is a man of any *size*, will keep him reverent."

I doubt whether any one has told more effectively what a college may do for a girl's mind than Dr. Thomas Fuller. In his "Church History of

Britain," he gives a short chapter to "The Conveniency of She-Colleges." (I once quoted this chapter at Smith College, and was accused of making it up.) "Nunneries also," he observes, "were good She-Schools, wherein the girls and maids of the neighborhood were taught to read and work; and sometimes a little Latin was taught them therein. Yea, give me leave to say, if such feminine foundations had still continued, provided no vow were obtruded upon them . . . haply the weaker sex (beside the avoiding modern inconveniences) might be heightened to a higher perfection than hitherto hath been attained. That sharpness of their wits, and suddenness of their conceits, which their enemies must allow unto them, might by education

be improved into a judicious solidity; and that adorned with arts which now they want, not because they cannot learn, but are not taught them. I say, if such feminine foundations were extant nowadays, haply some virgins of highest birth would be glad of such places; and, I am sure, their fathers and elder brothers would not be sorry for the same."

The feminine mind, with its quick intuitions and unsteady logic, may keep the intuitions and gain a firmness which makes it more than transiently stimulating. The emotional mind has its charm, especially if its emotions are favorable to ourselves. Women have long been celebrated for their power to love blindly — the kind of love some men must have if they are to have any. They are cele-

brated also for their power to keep on loving the unworthy when their eyes are opened. "Her lot is on you," says Mrs. Hemans in "Evening Prayer at a Girls' School": —

"Her lot is on you — silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear through suffering's hour,
And sumless riches, from affection's deep
To pour on broken reeds — a wasted shower!
And to make idols, and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship. Therefore pray!

"Her lot is on you — to be found untired,
Watching the stars out by the bed of pain,
With a pale cheek, and yet a brow inspired,
And a true heart of hope, though hope be vain;
Meekly to bear with wrong, to cheer decay,
And, oh! to love through all things. Therefore pray!"

In some things it may be well that emotion is greater than logic; but emotion *in logic* is sad to contend with, sad even to contemplate — and

such is too often the reasoning of the untrained woman. Do not for a moment suppose that I believe such reasoning peculiar to women; but from the best men it has been in great measure trained out; and it affects a higher grade of women, partly from physical causes, chiefly from a lack through many generations of the remedy applied to the best men. It is scarcely seventy-five years since a young New England girl, a lawyer's daughter, spent many hours in working on a sampler these verses, presumably absorbing them into her system as she worked: —

"Plain as this canvas was, as plain we find
Unlettered, unadorned, the female mind.
No fine ideas fill the vacant soul,
No graceful coloring animates the whole.
By close attention carefully inwrought
Fair education paints the pleasing thought,

My heart exults while to the attentive eye
The curious needle spreads the enamelled dye,
While varying shades the pleasing task beguile,
My friends approve me and my parents smile."

It seems just to believe that a girl may have more mind than the poet approved, without less charm. Dryden has been laughed at for saying that a man needs "in some measure a mathematical head to be a complete and excellent poet," and that imagination in poetry needs the "clogs" of judgment; yet in some degree Dryden was right. To be respected, poetry — and women, who are at their best a kind of poetry — must make sense. There *is* sense in loving the broken idol. To love what is proved unworthy is not the weakness of woman; it is rather the strength of God.

In a right-minded, sound-hearted

girl, college training tends toward control of the nervous system; and control of the nervous system — making it servant and not master — is almost the supreme need of women. Without such control they become helpless; with it they know scarcely a limit to their efficiency. The world does not yet understand that for the finest and highest work it looks and must look to the naturally sensitive, whether women or men. I remember expressing to the late Professor Greenough regret that a certain young teacher was nervous. His answer has been a comfort to me ever since. "I wouldn't give ten cents for any one who isn't." The nervous man or woman is bound to suffer; but the nervous man or woman may rise to heights that the

naturally calm can never reach and can seldom see. To whom do you go for counsel? To the calm, no doubt; but never to the phlegmatic — never to the calm who are calm because they know no better (like the man in Ruskin "to whom the primrose is very accurately the primrose because he does not love it"). You go to the calm who have fought for their calmness, who have known what it is to quiver in every nerve, but have put through whatever they have taken in hand. "I saw a queer old man over there in the corner," said a little girl sent to bed in the dark; "but I just turned my back to him and shut my eyes tight." That child, if she had lived, would be a counsellor of men and women. When the suffering of nervous people ex-

presses itself in constant exposition of their symptoms, when their own nerves become the centre of their lives, we are sometimes so hasty as to wish either that they had no nerves, or that we had none. We forget that they show perverted power. What suffering is that of the countless men and women who have fortitude without strength — like horses that road so many miles an hour "on their courage!" Yet I question whether their lives are not as efficient as those that know no weariness. For nobody who is not "strung high" can take many points of view beside his own, a power essential to that spiritual largeness to which we look for help. If you can sympathize, you must suffer. Would you give up sympathizing to be rid of suffering? We

admire a machine, but we do not go to it for advice. Should you like to be free from the annoyance of those who seek you as a counsellor? They take your time, wear your nerves, harrow your feelings, often reject what you offer, leave you exhausted and depressed with the depression of seeming inefficiency, with a sense of total failure. Yet it cannot be total failure, for they come again. And if you stop to think, you will thank heaven that there is something in you (God knows what) which makes you a woman from whom the perplexed cannot keep away. Some of the perplexed are bores. No matter. If you give your life's blood to those who ask for it, you must expect some of them to receive it as Mr. Casau-

bon received Dorothea's love, with "sandy absorption." You must expect even a vampire now and then. I knew a teacher who received merciless visits from the father of one of his pupils — a father who contended at great and, if I may say it, circular length that his son, an exceptionally dull youth, ought to have high marks and scholarships whatever his instructors thought; that his son knew more history than the professors and was a marvel of learning to all who understood him. The teacher writhed inwardly, but sat through the last visit as he had sat through the others. "My time is worse than wasted," he said to himself. "The man is as hopeless as his son." Suddenly at the end of an hour or so, the father, to whom not one point had

been yielded, rose to go. "One thing I'll say to you," he said. "You've got the patience of an ox!" and the teacher felt that he was paid; paid because what he had tried to do and had come perilously near failing to do he had done — because if he could stand that man indefinitely, and could make the man see that he could stand him, he could stand anybody for ever after. "This listening to truth and error," says Mr. Chesterton, "to heretics, to fools, to intellectual bullies, to desperate partisans, to mere chatterers, to systematic poisoners of the mind, is the hardest lesson that humanity has ever been set to learn."

All this may seem to have little connection with colleges. There are numberless sweet and patient wo-

men who never studied beyond the curriculum of the district school, women who help every one near them by their own unselfish loveliness; but the intelligently patient, the women who can put themselves into the places of all sorts of people, who can sympathize not merely with great and manifest griefs, but with every delicate jarring of the human soul — hardest of all, with the ambitions of the dull — these women, who must command a respect intellectual as well as moral, reach their highest efficiency through experience based on college training.

I dwell on these things because the older I grow the more clearly I see that one of the great problems of life is the transmuting of sensitiveness into strength, of weakness into

inspiration. "To be weak," says Satan in "Paradise Lost," "is miserable, doing or suffering." "I take pleasure," says St. Paul, "in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong." The problem confronts many men and most women. The author of the Upton Letters, himself as delicately sensitive as a woman, writes thus of depression: "When one lies awake in the morning, before the nerves are braced by contact with the wholesome day; when one has done a tiring piece of work, and is alone, and in that frame of mind when one needs occupation, but yet is not brisk enough to turn to the work one loves; in those dreary intervals

between one's work, when one is off with the old and not yet on with the new — well I know all the corners of the road, the shadowy cavernous places where the demons lie in wait for one, as they do for the wayfarer (do you remember?) in Bewick, who, desiring to rest by the roadside, finds the dingle all alive with ambushed fiends, horned and heavy-limbed, swollen with the oppressive clumsiness of nightmare." "But you," he adds to his correspondent, "have enough philosophy to wait until the frozen mood thaws, and the old thrill comes back. That is one of the real compensations of middle age. When one is young, one imagines that any depression will be continuous; and one sees the dreary uncomforted road winding

ahead over bare hills till it falls to the dark valley."

All this is true: depression goes as mysteriously as it came, the fog lifts as suddenly as it closed in; but this at best is consolation, not gospel — a sort of half-hearted assurance that life is not so bad after all. What I mean by the transmuting of weakness, of sensitiveness, into strength is more active than resignation, more courageous than fortitude. In Browning's "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came," the hero passes through everything that could take the heart out of a man — the most desolate, the meanest, the most God-forsaken country that ever poet depicted or imagined, in which every object seems knavishly designed to terrify by a sort of foul

ignobleness, such as summons all manner of evil spirits into a fearful mind and yields nothing for a healthy mind to react on. Through what seems the deliberate effort of Nature to sap his power of resisting fear, he goes on and on till suddenly he is face to face with death. Then comes the story which — next to that of the cross — shows best the quivering human soul that feels to the full every terror real or imaginary, yet steels itself to its work till its last act is an act of triumph and an inspiration to the world: —

"Burningly it came on me all at once,
This was the place! those two hills on the right,
Crouched like two bulls locked horn in horn in fight,
While, to the left, a tall scalped mountain . . . Dunce,
Dotard, a-dozing at the very nonce,
After a life spent training for the sight!

"What in the midst lay but the Tower itself?
The round, squat turret, blind as the fool's heart,
Built of brown stone, without a counterpart
In the whole world. The tempest's mocking elf
Points to the shipman thus the unseen shelf
He strikes on only when the timbers start.

"Not see? because of night perhaps?—why, day
Came back again for that! before it left,
The dying sunset kindled through a cleft:
The hills, like giants at a hunting, lay,
Chin upon hand, to see the game at bay,—
'Now stab and end the creature—to the heft!'

"Not hear, when noise was everywhere! it tolled
Increasing like a bell. Names in my ears
Of all the lost adventurers my peers,—
How such a one was strong, and such was bold,
And such was fortunate, yet each of old
Lost, lost! one moment knelled the woe of years.

"There they stood, ranged along the hill-sides, met
To view the last of me, a living frame
For one more picture! in a sheet of flame
I saw them and I knew them all. And yet
Dauntless the slug-horn to my lips I set,
And blew. '*Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came!*'"

This is the courage that is possible to every woman and indeed, in a world like ours, necessary to women if they are to realize the high purpose of their lives. With this courage they may accomplish almost anything. "Do not be disheartened," said Father Taylor, "because you are so weak. Remember that eighteen hundred years ago twelve feeble pair of arms lifted up the world and carried it to God."

I speak of that high womanliness which is as unlike femininity as puerility or juvenility is unlike strong and wholesome youth, that womanliness which it is the purpose of a woman's college to inspire and to sustain. The notion that a woman is at her best a sort of pretty fool with smelling salts is one of the first false

notions that the girls' college has dispelled. The college woman, as I see her, is a woman through and through—not an alluring time-killer who appeals at her worst to the basest and at her best to the most frivolous instincts of man. "I believe in college girls as wives," said a Harvard graduate with no daughters but with two sons who had married college girls. One of these wives was abroad with her husband, who was studying; the other was keeping house for her husband and little child, with no servant,—and a happier household I have seldom seen. College life had been her business once; domestic life was her business now: and her training had taught her to take up whatever was her business with a whole heart. The college life of the

past enlarged and brightened the domestic life of the present. Her sweetness was intellectual as well as moral. Her college life had made her a better companion to her husband, a better guide and guardian to her child.

Those who fear that the higher education unfits women for drudgery have in mind either the wrong kind of higher education or the wrong kind of women. An officer of a woman's college, when asked whether she would let her students hear an enthusiastic physician who urged college girls to think of becoming nurses, remarked that she did not care for nursing as a profession among educated women because of its many "disagreeable details." She failed to see that a great nurse — like

a great anybody else — is to some degree inspired, and that to an inspired being a disagreeable detail, if a detail of duty, is glorified as a small part of that duty which is a crowning joy. If college training is good for anything, it is good in showing us what little things are little, and what, as necessary parts of the great, have themselves taken on a kind of greatness. Without a glimpse of the great to which the little is essential, of the little which we love because, like Browning's star, it has "opened its soul" to us, life becomes at its best endurable, and earth, as the hymn says, "a desert drear." With such a glimpse, the faintest-hearted of us may have — indeed must have — moments of triumph. At college we are taught to feel the unexplored big-

ness of every subject, the relation of truth to truth. A Harvard student once complained bitterly that Zoology x and Economics y (Sociology) conflicted in their lecture hours. To my untrained mind no conflict could be less damaging; he, however, explained that "Since Sociology has left the Sunday School and become a Science, no man can study it without a knowledge of the lower forms of animal life,"—and I dare say he was right. As to small details, I have seen enthusiasm for a comma which seemed to me not the petty love of a little thing, but part of a large zeal for truth.

Let us consider what connection, if any, college life has with the unwomanliness so often charged to its account. If our grandmothers

wrought such samplers as I have described, is it any wonder that their descendants, emancipated, felt like colts turned loose in a field? Or that "the female mind," so carefully emptied before, did not always evince a trained wisdom in electing what to be filled with? Just as in the girls' boarding school the proscription of boys made boys more interesting, so the prescription of femininity gave masculinity a charm. This was especially true of sporting masculinity, which in men themselves is often half affectation. Few things are more pitiable than a woman's deliberate imitation of a sporting man; but the masculine woman is not the college woman. Offensive masculinity in a woman argues weakness such as colleges strive to

remove. The effeminate man and the masculine woman are alike weak in that discernment which tells people what they are made for, what they cannot be becomingly, and what they cannot be at all. A Harvard student commenting on a celebrated but overrated preacher observed, "Briefly, his whole pulpit manner is that of a man not quite big enough to be simple." In the effeminate man and in the masculine woman we feel a want of size — much as we feel a want of size in the American traveller whom a few weeks in England have covered with what Professor Greenough used to call "Britannia plate." It is the littleness of a person not strong enough to resist the moulding force of surroundings. There are, it is true, occupa-

tions in which scarcely anybody can succeed without loss of that modest gentleness which becomes both women and men. An auctioneer, a book agent, an "interviewing" reporter must dull his sensibilities and sharpen his wits. It is not so with a college student; certainly it is not so with a college graduate as such. The good and the great may pass through impressionable periods which render them more or less absurd to others, and in retrospect to themselves. That is another matter. "Pen's condescension," says Thackeray, "at this time of his life was a fine thing to witness. Amongst men of ability this assumption and impertinence passes off with extreme youth; but it is curious to watch the conceit of a generous and

clever lad — there is something almost touching in every early exhibition of simplicity and folly."

Just so a slight athletic swagger in a young woman with a basketball halo does not mean that she will be mannish for life. It subsides, like the puffed cheeks of mumps — rather grotesque while it lasts, but not at all prophetic. College life, designed as it is to strengthen a girl's intellect and character, should teach her to understand better, and not worse, herself as distinguished from other beings of her own sex or the opposite, should fortify her individuality, her power of resisting, and her determination to resist, the contagion of the unwomanly. Exaggerated study may lessen womanly charm; but there is nothing loud or mascu-

line about it. Nor should we judge mental training or anything else by scattered cases of its abuse. The only characteristics of women that the sensible college girl has lost are feminine frivolity, and that kind of headless inaccuracy in thought and speech which once withheld from the sex — or from a large part of it — the intellectual respect of educated men.

At college, if you have lived rightly, you have found enough learning to make you humble, enough friendship to make your hearts large and warm, enough culture to teach you the refinement of simplicity, enough wisdom to keep you sweet in poverty and temperate in wealth. Here you have learned to see great and small in their true relation, to look at both

sides of a question, to respect the point of view of every honest man or woman, and to recognize the point of view that differs most widely from your own. Here you have found the democracy that excludes neither poor nor rich, and the quick sympathy that listens to all and helps by the very listening. Here too, it may be at the end of a long struggle, you have seen — if only in transient glimpses — that after doubt comes reverence, after anxiety peace, after faintness courage, and that out of weakness we are made strong. Suffer these glimpses to become an abiding vision, and you have the supreme joy of life.

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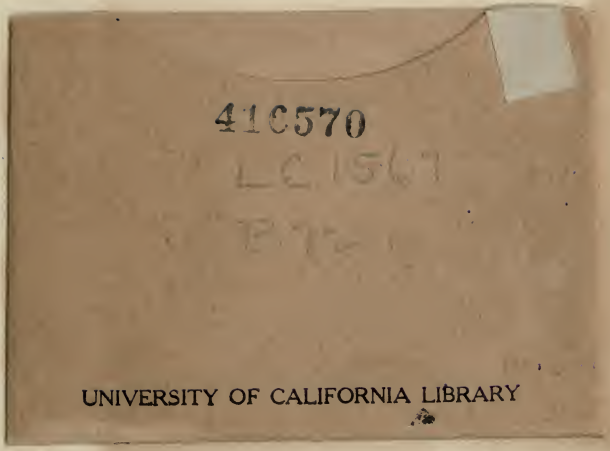
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